(ix) A programme for phasing out of lead content in petrol is under implementation. Unleaded petrol with catalytic converter fitted vehicles has been introduced in the four metropolitan cities.

**LPG Connections in Punjab**

986. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of LPG connections with each agency in various districts of Punjab State and the number of persons on the waiting list, as on 30th October, 1995;

(b) by when the waiting list is likely to be cleared; and

(c) what speedy steps are being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPTAIN SATISH SHARMA): (a) The requisite information is given in the Annexure.

[*See* Appendix 175, Annexure No. 24]

(b) and (c) New LPG connections are released in a phased manner throughout the country including Punjab depending upon the availability of LPG, new customer enrolment plan, waiting list, slack available with the distributors and their viability. Efforts are however constantly on to release LPG connections to as may applicants and as early as possible.

**Sanction for posts for Cochin Port Trust**

987. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Cochin Port Trust has requested to sanction a few posts for handling the container traffic and their maintenance;

(b) if so, what action has been taken thereon;

(c) since when these requests are pending before Central Government and the reasons for the delay; and

(d) whether Government are aware that the port containers traffic is suffering due to the want of sufficient staff?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI M. RAJASEKARA MURTHY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (d) The proposal for creation of posts for operation and maintenance of Container Terminal at Cochin Port was received in 1992. The Projet was completed only on 31.12.94. 113 posts in different categories were sanctioned till November 1993. Now the demand of the port is for creation of additional 148 posts. With 113 posts plus 30 posts which were created at the construction stage, the terminal is operating in two shifts. The proposal for creation of additional posts is under active consideration of the Government.

**Scarcity of Technical staff at Cochin Port**

988. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the maintenance of equipments including the cranes are suffering due to scarcity of the technical staff at the Cochin Port; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons that the port authorities are not recruiting enough staff to keep the proper maintenance of the imported costly equipments?